

Ashland Tidings

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Ashland, Ore., Monday June 10, 1912

THE ELECTRIC LIGHT PLANT.

Slowly but surely the electric light department is being placed upon a practical business basis. Last Tuesday night the council passed a resolution providing that from and after January 1, 1912, the electric light department should be paid 1 1/2 cents per candle power per month for current consumed in lighting the city.

There has been some question as to whether the electric light plant could be made to pay. The Tidings maintains that the plant can be made a profitable proposition. It can only be so by selling the output at what it is worth, whether it is used by the municipality or by private individuals.

The waterworks should be put on the same basis. If a private corporation owned the Ashland waterworks it would charge a fixed sum for each hydrant, for all taps for every city use, and for each school house, just as it charges for private use. If the waterworks department is to be maintained and is expected to carry its own weight, the only way it can be brought about is by collecting for every service.

The city should pay the waterworks fund as well as the electric light fund for every service it gets from these departments and the profits from them should be used to retire the bonds issued for their construction. And these profits when collected should be inviolable. They should be used to retire the bonds and for no other purpose, until the department is entirely out of debt.

Some will ask, "What is the difference? We have to pay for it all anyhow; it would only be transferring tax moneys out of one fund to the other."

There is this difference: Municipal ownership of water and lights is on trial. Many persons argue they cannot be made profitable. In order to intelligently demonstrate the truth, the lighting and water departments should be made to bear the same relation to the city as would be borne by a privately owned plant—that is, that consumption, by whomsoever used, must be paid for.

When this is correctly done in Ashland it will be found that each of these public utilities will not only carry themselves but will retire the bonds issued for their construction, as they fall due. After while, then, all of the bonds will be paid, interest charges will cease, and the profits from these two sources will be almost sufficient to carry the general city expense fund without a direct tax levy.

A consummation devoutly to be wished for, but which will surely soon be brought about if the business is handled as wisely and judiciously as it would be in private hands.

REFRIGERATOR SERVICE.

The inauguration of a fast refrigerator line from Ashland to Portland, by the S. P. Company, will prove of incalculable benefit to the Rogue river valley. It will carry all sorts of vegetable, fruit and poultry products and provide a market for the valley heretofore impracticable.

The service will be started as a tri-weekly experiment, its permanency depending upon the tonnage. If the tonnage increases, as it no doubt will, the service will be made daily.

This service should prove an immense stimulus to dairy and poultry culture in the valley. There is no reason why a carload of poultry products per day should not be produced by Ashland alone. There is no better place on the coast for chicken culture.

Slowly but surely the Rogue river valley is being put in touch with its natural and profitable markets through the S. P. Company, a consummation long hoped for and now hailed with gratitude.

The fortieth annual reunion of the Oregon Pioneer Association will be held in Portland, June 20.

COST OF ARMAMENT.

Professor Briscoe, in his Decoration day oration, crystallized a thought well known by many but remembered by few, in regard to the cost of the civil war, in human life and treasure, and the cost of maintaining armed peace throughout the world.

He emphasized the stupendous fact that the world cost of armament maintenance if applied to education would build each year a national university at a cost of ten millions; a university for each state costing one million each; one hundred high schools in each state; five normals in each state; five technical schools in each state; thirty agricultural schools; and have enough left to add to the common school funds of each state one million dollars and pay for every text book used by the children of the nation.

And all of this treasure is expended for what? To maintain a peace which could be as easily maintained by a simple international world agreement without a cent of cost.

Last fall when the writer came through San Francisco, on his way from southern California, there were lying in the bay there six American battleships. They were veritable sea monsters as well as sea masters. It was cleaning and wash day and thousands of men moved in and out at their tasks, and the great gun muzzles glistened in the sunlight. To an American citizen it was an inspiring scene. It was good to look upon these great instruments of death and think that through such our own country had come to be the greatest world power that had ever existed on the face of the earth.

And then there came that other thought; the gigantic expense connected with its maintenance. How perfectly useless it all was in a thoroughly civilized age, if, indeed, this age could be called so, and how much greater good this vast treasure might be made to the world if invested in utensils of civilization instead of engines of death.

We thought of the barren wastes we had crossed on our journey from the middle west—what vast need of treasure there was there—what grand possibilities for reclaiming and transforming these burning sands into gardens of beneficence and joy—how the waste waters of the mountains might be harnessed and made to work for humanity on their way to the sea. We had just visited the magnificent Roosevelt dam at Phoenix, and had witnessed the grand metamorphose from desert to garden, or three hundred thousand fertile acres at an expense of but six millions of treasure. How a wise government had turned these dollars into an agency of everlasting good to the nation.

We thought of the roads that might be built, of the want that might be alleviated, of the vast possibilities for education, that lay in this wasted treasure—what might be accomplished in internal improvements in this nation, in twenty short years, if this sum was turned to the true uses of civil development, and we said: God hasten the day when the nations of the world grow wise enough to shake off the habiliments of barbarism and doff the true and shining garb of civilization and humanity.

And let our own America, the freest and most enlightened of all nations, lead the way in this splendid and gigantic world task.

CHICAGO AND BALTIMORE.

The greatest preliminary battle for delegates in both leading parties is nearly over and we know as much about the probable outcome as we knew before the battle began and very little more.

It is thirty-two years since the republican situation presented such elements of uncertainty and dramatic interest as it does this year. In 1880 the struggle between Blaine and Grant was fierce and bitter, but not so much so as the present struggle between Taft and Roosevelt. Neither Blaine nor Grant reached the convention with a clear majority. The party did not dare to risk desertion of the friends of one by nominating the other. The result was that Garfield and Arthur emerged as the final ticket. Both were comparatively unknown.

It is sixteen years since the democratic situation was so mixed and doubtful as now. In 1896 the leading contestants were Governor Horace Boies of Iowa and Silver Dick Bland of Maryland. Both were cast aside and the party went to battle under Bryan and Sewall, both comparatively unknown men. This year is pregnant with unknown possibilities, including the possibility of a new party. It seems to be one of those peculiar years when the unlikely outcome is most likely.

Get ready for the Fourth.

ABOUT ROTTEN CATSUP.

It is quite impossible for a mere layman to understand anything about the method of enforcing the pure food law, as now enforced by the department of agriculture. From the public notice of judgment No. 1329, issued by the department May 13, we learn that a case involving adulteration of catsup was decided against the Bilken Winzer Grocer Company of Burlington, Iowa.

The chemistry bureau's examination of this catsup showed it to contain "yeasts and spores to the number of 329 per one-sixtieth cubic millimeter and 100,000,000 bacteria in each cubic centimeter, also mold filaments present in 94 per cent of the microscopic fields examined."

Adulteration was alleged "because it consisted in whole or in part of a putrid or decomposed vegetable substance and was therefore liable to seizure for confiscation."

Now see what happened to this filthy, decomposed mess:

"The court found the product adulterated as alleged, and entered a decree condemning and forfeiting it to the United States but with the proviso that it might be released to claimants upon the payment of all costs and the execution by them of a bond on condition that the said property should not be again sold contrary to law."

What in thunder would the company do with this rotten catsup if they could not sell it again?

To make Ashland greater we must make our individual selves greater. We must believe in ourselves and in Ashland. There is nothing selfish in saying "I am strong, I can do things, I believe in myself." There is nothing arrogant in believing and saying, "Ashland is the grandest city in all the world—she has the natural elements in her that will make her great—God has planted here a city pre-eminent; I can and will develop her; she shall become what nature intended her, the grandest health emporium of the earth." Only the narrow minded will look upon the man who speaks thus as an egotist and a palaverer.

A paper mis-called "Clean Politics" is being circulated, charging that Colonel Roosevelt is a drunkard. That reminds us of the well-meaning minister who complained to Lincoln that Grant was a drunkard and ought to be removed as general of the army. Lincoln heard the complaint through, then quizzically asked: "Can you find out for me what brand General Grant drinks?" The minister was surprised and asked, "Why?" "Well," said Lincoln, "I would like to get a supply for some of my other generals."

MILES STANDISH.

Miles Standish is one of the Pilgrim Fathers who has rattled down through history in company with some amorous blank verse by H. Longfellow. Miles came over in the Mayflower and had all of the diseases which the Pilgrim Fathers brought with them, but he had a very low rating as a Puritan, having a temper which nobody cared to toy with and a vocabulary of rich and undorned epithets. On account of his squatty style of architecture and a mild blue eye, Miles was picked on a good deal at first by strangers, several of whom died while in the act of discovering their mistake. The Pilgrim Fathers and the Indians were not on speaking terms at this time, as the Indians used to come around and kill off a few of the neighbors and steal onions and other canned goods. As this was before the codfish ball was invented, an epidemic of the triple-plated scurvy broke out and the colonists were kept so busy scratching each other's backs that people couldn't tell a town meeting from a corn-husking bee. Miles refused to have anything to do with the scurvy, but his friend, John Alden, got enough for two, as is so touchingly portrayed by Mr. Longfellow. Miles had been made a widower some time before, and not liking it as well as he thought he should, he decided to marry Priscilla Mullins, a young lady who came as near being a coquette as any of the Pilgrim Mothers ever got without being parboiled over a slow fire for witchcraft. On the day that he intended to propose to Priscilla, Miles was called out to suffocate a few Indians, so he sent Mr. Alden with a power of attorney and a quit claim deed to his shotgun. John Alden is one of the basest characters in American history. Clad in a blue nankeen suit and the fetid atmosphere of the quinine pill, he sidled up to Priscilla and suggested that she ought to marry somebody before old age gilded her with crowfeet and other blemishes. Priscilla had not thought of being married that week, but after remarking, "This is so sudden," or words to that effect, she laid her head on John's shoulder and spilled a number of large, salt tears on his shirt front. When Standish heard the news at prayer meeting, his first impulse was to erect a modest headstone over John's remains, but after seeing a little of John's home life and the brand of sole leather cooking he had to put up with, he ceased to repine.

The Hermiton farmers are now busy harvesting their first crop of alfalfa, which is above the average.

The Home Circle

Thoughts from the Editorial Pen

A Swede was courting his girl one night, and, overcome by the tender passion, asked her to marry him. She readily consented, after which both were silent for a long time. Finally the girl asked Ole why he didn't say anything. He replied, "I tank der bane too much said already."

A woman of Seattle, Wash., advertised for a young man to whip a wife-beater. She was flooded with applications. She selected a young man, six feet, and weighing 190. Her prize was \$10. This young man said he would do the job gratis; that it would be pleasure to do it. The papers say the husband has not been able to be out since the job was completed.

To steal a kiss is natural. To buy one is stupid. Two girls kissing is a waste of time. To kiss one's sister is proper. To kiss one's wife is obligation. To kiss an ugly woman is gallantry. To kiss an old, faded woman is devotion. To kiss a young, blushing girl is—quite a different thing. To kiss one's rich aunt is hypocrisy. Kissing three girls on the same day is extravagance.

There are a great many people who labor under the delusion that what was once known as the "drop letter" can be mailed with a one-cent stamp. That is a mistake. Every sealed letter, even if it contains only printed matter, requires two cents. So does a written letter whether sealed or not. These rules apply as much to letters addressed to people in Ashland as to people in San Francisco.

Look most to your spending. No matter what comes in, if more goes out you will always be poor. The art is not in making money, but in keeping it; little expenses, like mice in a large barn, when they are many, make great waste. Hair by hair beads get bald, straw by straw the thatch goes off the cottage, and drop by drop the rain comes into the chamber. A barrel is soon empty if the tap leaks but a drop a minute.

At a funeral of a well-known saloonkeeper, the minister, instead of making the usual announcement that "an opportunity will now be given to view the remains," thought to make a change in the announcement and said, "An opportunity will now be given to pass around the beer." And quite a number of old fellows in the back part of the room wiped the sympathetic tears from their eyes, removed their quids of tobacco, spit out of the window and awaited results.

We live in what may be termed a superficial age. A man or a woman is judged by clothing and external appearance—not by intrinsic qualities. We wear diamonds to show that we are "well to do." We wear fine raiment to show people that we can afford it. We live in stone-front houses to prove that we belong to the upper class. To discern character, which, after all, is the thing of greatest value, we must look beneath the exterior surface, for such virtues as honesty, consistency, humility and character, which are the attributes of the best people.

Every community is divided into workers and shirkers, hoppers and mopers. The workers toil on cheerily, daily contributing to the prosperity of the place and full of hope and plans for its future. The shirkers hang back, contribute nothing to its welfare, criticize those who do and talk despondingly of things in general. Strange as it may seem, it is easier to be a worker than a shirker, and certainly it is a good deal better all around. Then, also, there is the satisfaction of knowing that one's life amounts to something. Therefore don't shirk, work; don't mope, hope.

It is estimated that the great school army eligible to school privileges in the United States will number approximately fourteen millions. Of the total number about one-half of them are between 10 and 14 years of age; those from 15 to 17 constitute less than 13 per cent and those of 18 and over about 5 per cent. There is a significant fact in the research which was made in estimating the actual and the possible strength of the school army of the United States that out of the entire number of children ranging between 5 and 9 years of age available only half attended school; of those from 10 to 14 years of age substantially four-fifths, and those of from 15 to 17 a little over two-fifths.

The boy stood on the back yard fence, whence all but him had fled, the flames that lit his father's barn shone just above the shed. One bunch of crackers in his hand, two others in his hat, with piteous accents loud he cried, "I never thought of that." A bunch of crackers to the tail of one small dog he'd tied; that dog in anguish sought the barn and "mid its ruins died. The sparks flew wide and red and hot, they lit upon the brat, they fired the crackers in his hand and eke those in his hat. There came a burst of rattling sound—the boy! Where was he gone? Ask of the winds that far around strewn bits of meat and bone, and scraps of clothes and balls and tops and nails and hooks and yarn, the relics of the dreadful boy that burned his father's barn.

Land offices report a great deal of inquiry for vacant land in this state and it is expected that 1912 will be notable for the large areas of the government domain to be taken by settlers. The change in the land laws, allowing a residence of three years on a homestead preliminary to making proof, which has passed both houses of congress and waits only the signature of the president, is making public lands more attractive than ever before to the settler.

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